



EXECUTIVE

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April 3, 2019

Testimony of Edward A. Barrett, Lewiston City Administrator
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
Testimony on LD 401: "An Act to Preserve Landfill Capacity and Promote Recycling"

Representative Tucker, Senator Carson and Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee, my name is Ed Barrett and I am City Administrator in Lewiston.

As proposed, LD 401 would eliminate the ability to dispose of any Construction and Demolition (C&D) process residuals at the State-Owned Juniper Ridge Landfill (JRL) generated when recycling out-of-state waste. It would also eliminate the recycling credit for the amount of processed residual fines beneficially used at JRL for daily cover. Based on our understanding, if passed LD 401 would result in the closure of the ReEnergy C&D Recycling facility, a facility that is an important element of the City of Lewiston's overall solid waste management program.

ReEnergy Lewiston employs up to 45 full-time employees at the facility with some seasonal variation. The facility accepts C&D material and OBW from local businesses and the general public. It benefits Lewiston by making lease and tax payments and offering free disposal of C&D and OBW to the City of Lewiston. The direct benefit to the City is about \$275,000 annually, not accounting for the facility's indirect support through employment and charitable giving. As one simple example, since 2010, the City has demolished over 70 dangerous and abandoned structures at a cost of over \$2 million. Without ReEnergy accepting this demo debris at no cost, our taxpayers would have faced either significantly higher costs or we would not have been able to remove these hazards from our community.

Since ReEnergy assumed operation of the Lewiston facility in 2013, they have invested in the facility and increased their recycling rate to more than 75% of accepted waste. They have informed us that they plan to make a significant investment in the facility in 2019 to further increase the amount and type of materials recycled, an investment that will not happen if LD 401 is adopted in its present form. ReEnergy's commitment to the Lewiston facility supports the State's established solid waste goals and hierarchy and has allowed an increase in recycling rates for certain wastes generated within the City.

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For a number of reasons, many of which are beyond the company's direct control, the ReEnergy Lewiston facility has faced continuing financial challenges over the last several years. Recognizing the importance of this facility to our solid waste management program, the City has worked closely with ReEnergy to help address these challenges. At one point, for example, the City provided ReEnergy lease and other concessions to help keep the facility open. If LD 401 is adopted as presented, it is our understanding that no amount of economic concession from the City would allow the facility to remain open.

ReEnergy Lewiston provides an important service that both helps the State meet its recycling goals and is an important and cost effective element of the City's solid waste system.

We urge the Committee to carefully consider the impact this legislation will have on ReEnergy and the City of Lewiston and either amend or eliminate draft sections 3, 4, and 7 or vote 'Ought Not to Pass' on LD 401.

Thank you for your consideration. I'd be happy to answer any questions.